

SUPPORT SB 486

By Senator Taylor Brown

Requiring City Governments to use public safety mill levies for the purpose stated on the ballot measure and granting a petition process for a hearing.

SUPPORT:

Providing Citizen & taxpayer, over site of dedicated mill levy revenue spending by City Government.

Clayton Fiscus
Chairman Citizens For Honest Ballots

Jerry Hansen
Treasurer

SUPPORT SB-486

1. Clayton Fiscus - Broker Owner, Fiscus Realty, 35 Years.
2. I support SB 486 - We must use revenue from public safety mill levies for the purpose stated. That's just being honest with tax payer dollars. Shifting money from firefighters to City Administration is a Barney Madoff ponzi scheme!"
3. I was chairman of Citizens for Honest Ballots
 - (a.) We Challenged the 2004 PSM levy (deceptive and erroneous)
 - (b.) 12,000 Signatures in 36 days put it to a vote a second time.
 - (c.) Goal was to inform city property owners the true cost of the public safety mill levy and what it was for.

Exhibit #1

Citizens for Honest Ballot's demonstrated the 2004 mill levy was not clear.

Exhibit #2

Citizens for Honest Ballot's illustrated clearly the levy was cumulative and permanent and dedicated to the Fire Department and Police.

Exhibit #3

The cost over 5 years. Please note, the figures do not include a 20 mill levy passed in 1999 of another \$2,600,000 annually. That one grows with increased market values. "Need for Over site."

Exhibit #4

Compares the 2004-2009 and the PSL 2000 2004 PSL, and the 89 mills for all city operations. Be mindful the fire department & police were funded completely by the city fund prior to 2000. Need for spending over site.

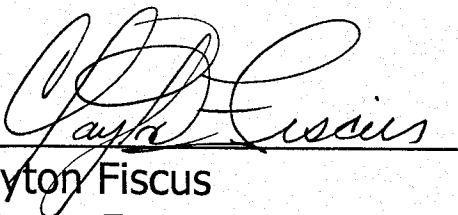
Exhibit #5

Demonstrate how they used fire fighters and the police in order to push the largest mill levy hike in the history of municipal government.

SUMMARY:

1. City officials from the Mayor to the City Council stated the 2004 mill levy was clear as cumulative & permanent and the specific purpose.
2. Exhibit # 6 the city council's ballot clearly reveals. The 20 mills for the 2000 mill levy would be spent on top of the general funds already paid out for public safety. The safety mill levy did not exist before 2000.
3. The question comes, How do you stop the city from using dedicated safety mill levy money elsewhere? The answer: Support SB 486
4. Citizens for Honest Ballots Treasurer & Accountant found Revenue fund transfers, (Take out of one pocket and put in the other.) Also we found lack of honesty on ballot measure language on the 2004 mill levy ballot. Cumulative and Permanent left out.

**SUPPORT SB 486 - Revenue shift oversight.
Senator Taylor Brown.**



Clayton Fiscus
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Citizens For Honest Ballots

A Fact Filled Voters / Guide

EXPOSING the Deceptive, Erroneous 2004 Public Safety Mill Levy Ballot- The Controversy - City Scare Tactics.

Left Off The 2004 Ballot:

A WARNING: This **TAX IS CUMULATIVE & PERMANENT.**

Cumulative Effect - \$27,000,000 **First 5-Years.**

Permanent Cost - \$8,200,000 **Per Year Forever.**

Combining the 1999 & 2004 Public Safety Mill Levy taxpayers will **Suffer Nine Property Tax Hikes in Ten Years.**

A 53% Increase in City property tax rates.

You Pay for a New Fire Station every year FOREVER!

Ballot Turmoil: Senators, representatives, council members and trade associations have joined the controversy stating the ballot language was Deceptive.

EXHIBIT
#1

CITY ORDINANCE 04-5288

- Sec. 1.05.1. Mill Levy to Fund Fire, Police and Related Public Safety Expenses.
- For the purpose of funding the operation, maintenance and capital needs of the fire department, police department, and related public safety expenses, the City Council shall raise the following amounts of money by levying the required number of mills:

TABLE INSET:

■	2005/ 2006	\$2,600,000	approximately 20 mills
■	2006/2007	\$1,400,000	approximately 10 mills
■	2007/2008	\$1,400,000	approximately 10 mills
■	2008/2009	\$1,400,000	approximately 10 mills
■	2009/2010	\$1,400,000	approximately 10 mills

- The foregoing mill levies are **cumulative, permanent**, and in addition to any other mill levies authorized by Charter or law.
- (Ord. No. 04-5288, § 1, 7-12-04)

EXHIBIT

#2

5 YEAR TAX COLLECTIONS

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
FY 2006	\$ 2,600,000
FY 2007	4,000,000
FY 2008	5,400,000
FY 2009	6,800,000
FY 2010	<u>8,200,000</u>
TOTAL FIRST 5 YEARS	<u>\$27,000,000</u>
EVERY 5 YEARS FOREVER	<u>\$41,000,000</u>

BIGGEST

TAX INCREASE IN THE CITY'S

HISTORY

	<u>MILLS</u>	<u>INCREASE</u>
		%
FY1999 – All City Operations	<u>89.00</u>	
PSL FY2000 – FY2003	<u>20.00</u>	
FY 2005 Mills	113.73	
2004 Public Safety Levy	<u>60.00</u>	53%
Total After 5 years of Public Safety Levy	<u>173.73</u>	

CITIZENS FOR HONEST BALLOTS STATEMENT:

The 2004 Ballot caused community turmoil.

FACT: A small group of people, calling themselves Citizens for Honest Ballot Statements, created the turmoil and have put the Public Safety levy back on the ballot even though it passed in 2004 by nearly 2 to 1. The City must pay Yellowstone County for any items that appear on a ballot. The cost to the taxpayer for this unnecessary election is equivalent to one police officer or firefighter.

CITIZENS FOR HONEST BALLOTS MYTH:

The City is using scare tactics and baseless threats.

FACT: Fire and Police are facing a shortfall of over \$4.2 million in fiscal year 2008 if the levy is repealed. This shortfall equals pay and benefits for 77 public safety employees.

CITIZENS FOR HONEST BALLOTS MYTH:

You pay for a new fire station every year forever!

FACT: After the fire station is paid off in FY2011 ongoing money pays for personnel, operation and maintenance.

CITIZENS FOR HONEST BALLOTS MYTH:

The ballot was deceptive and voters didn't know the levy would be permanent and cumulative.

FACT: The ordinance that amended the Charter stated that the levy would be permanent and cumulative. Multiple newspaper and other media reports stated these facts. Public safety is an on-going need and common sense tells us that the levy must be permanent because personnel and operating costs don't end at some artificial time horizon. Montana Attorney General Mike McGrath stated that the 2004 Billings public safety levy ballot was lawful!

CITIZENS FOR HONEST BALLOTS MYTH:

Yearly insurance rates won't increase if the levy is repealed.

FACT: If the levy is repealed and the Fire Dept. reduces employment, the City will close up to 2 fire stations. Property insurance rates will increase when the Insurance Services Office rating of a 3 goes higher or the city's per capita property losses increase due to longer Fire Dept. response times.

"Property owners in West Yellowstone will likely see a rise in their fire insurance bills of between 40 to 70%."

Operations Manager Fred Rice explained that two years ago the ISO warned local authorities that the 7 rating would be dropped if improvements were not made in areas of staffing, training and equipment. Fire Chief Jason Carranbone responded that the ISO rating was primarily concerned with staffing and training and that without enough qualified personnel the ladder truck counted for very little."

*—Excerpt of Article by David Warner
West Yellowstone News, 9/22/06*

- The safety levy is a "dollar for dollar" levy. As more business and residential properties come into our local tax system, the demands and amount on individual taxes will lessen.
- Billings population has grown 1.5 to 2% annually and there have been 600 construction permits per year. This growth is expected to continue.

Increase Insurance Premiums

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) evaluates and rates community fire protection on a 1-10 scale. Fifty percent of the overall grading is based on the number of engine companies and the amount of water a community needs to fight a fire. ISO reviews the distribution of fire companies throughout the area and checks that the fire department tests its pumps regularly and inventories each engine company's nozzles, hoses, breathing apparatus and other equipment. Many insurance companies use ISO ratings to set the premiums they charge for property insurance. The better the community ISO rating, the lower premiums are.

Decrease Response Times

Levy monies will maintain and improve current services by adding additional police officers and more equipment. More police officers will be at the scene of your emergency, enabling them to provide faster, better and more efficient service.

Protecting and serving the Billings Community is our main priority. The public safety levy must remain in place in order to enhance service and safety to the citizens and officers.

BILLINGS

MONTANA LAW ENFORCEMENT

MISSOULA

Population: 101,000	Population: 61,384
S sworn Officers: 132	S sworn Officers: 96
Officers per 1000 population: 1.31	Officers per 1000 population: 1.48
• It would take 25 more officers Billings to match the Missoula	

ELLS

EXhibit

#5

on 1.48
ers in
nan rating

No mention of a
Resolution

Voted on The
Ordinance in (body)
the title + state-
ment of Resolution
(For + against section)

CITY OF BILLINGS

REFERENDUM ON CITY OF BILLINGS ORDINANCE NO. 98-5062

The Billings City Council adopted Ordinance No. 98-5062, which amends the City Charter to provide a mill levy dedicated solely to the Police and Fire Departments for maintaining 1998-1999 levels of service. The City Council is authorized to phase in a permanent increase by levying no more than 5 additional mills in each of the next 4 fiscal years for a total increase of no more than 20 mills. The amendment to the Charter becomes effective only if approved by the City electors as required by law. This Ordinance is repealed if Ordinance 98-5063 (to increase services) is passed.

- ☐ FOR amending the City Charter to add a mill levy for Police and Fire to maintain 1998-1999 levels of service as provided in Ordinance 98-5062.
- ☐ AGAINST amending the City Charter to add a mill levy for Police and Fire to maintain 1998-1999 levels of service as provided in Ordinance 98-5062.

EXHIBIT #
6

Signature Gathering Petition Amendments Information

Statewide Initiative in Good Location- Polls or
Court House Per Person.

1 Every 3 Minutes 160 Per Day Average.

Average City Petition in Good Location

1 Every 4 Minutes 120 Per Day Average.

Door To Door (People not Home)

1 Every 6 Minutes 80 Per Day Average.

20% of the signatures are not valid.

On the 2004 PSML we averaged 350 Signers a
day for the 36 days time limit to gather
approximately 12,200 signers. That is 3 people
working at least 8 hours a day. Good people.